



For immediate publication

PRESS RELEASE

Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce surveys the Southern region to support merchants after the passing of Hurricane Fiona

On their first visit to the south of Puerto Rico, they verified the millionaire loss in the commercial sector, especially the agricultural sector that supplies the chains of small businesses and stores.

San Juan, Puerto Rico --- The impact of the rains, winds and floods after Hurricane Fiona's passing last Sunday, September 18, affected families, businesses and farms, among other sectors, mainly in the southern and western areas of the island. The Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce (PRCC) visited the municipalities of Santa Isabel, Ponce and Guayanilla, where they were able to verify the millionaire loss in the commercial sector, especially the agricultural sector. Agriculture was one of the areas that suffered the most from this phenomenon, due to farms losing all their crops including: green mangoes, local mangoes, bananas, papayas, pickles and pumpkins. These farms also supply the chain of small and chain stores.

"The loss of the crops and harvests is a double blow to our economy since it forces us to import more goods to replace the harvests that were lost, which in turn increases costs and the harvest cycle begins again," said Liza García Vélez Esq., executive director CCPR.

Throughout the gastronomic route of Guayanilla, the experience was very different from that of Hurricane María, around 38 inches of rain fell for over two days and the sea entered the businesses, leaving damage mainly to the equipment and in many cases the loss of all the inventory. "The high cost of recovery for PYMES is a critical factor in order to reopen operations quickly and this affects not only the business factor but also the reopening of services to the communities and the operation that occurs around them like entertainment, sports and direct services that cannot be generated by the government", stated Cameron McKenzie, president of the CCPR.

After their visit, the businesses indicated that among their most pressing needs are electric generators, Hot Spots for Wi-Fi, Diesel, gasoline for smaller generators, water, and inventory and equipment losses. The Chamber together with the Department of Economic Development and other organizations seek to understand the needs of each business through the following form: <https://primexpr.wufoo.com/forms/situacion-inmediata-huracan-fiona/> where in the first question they must select Chamber of Commerce. If you cannot fill out the survey or want to discuss any other topic, you can write to lgarcia@camarapr.net by email or through WhatsApp to 787-529-7451.

"Our call to businesses is to quantify the damages that include cleanup and recovery processes, those who are insured, follow the steps for claims, access incentives and provide data on losses. That helps us make visible the real loss they have. Our call to the Government is that we must speed up and execute in order to reopen businesses as soon as possible. The more days that pass, the economic loss is irreparable. The Electric Power Authority and LUMA must energize the country urgently, because as a business operation and a tourist and business destination, it is impossible to enter the world market in the dark," concluded McKenzie.



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About the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce:

The Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization with an entrepreneurial perspective that represents a wide range of commerce and industry sectors, whether large or small, with multisectoral representation with the purpose of strengthening economic development and progress, based on the pillars of free enterprise to ensure business certainty and improve the quality of life of all Puerto Ricans. The organization also serves as a spokesperson for business in Puerto Rico, representing all commercial, industrial, professional activities and those that constitute the fundamental basis of the Puerto Rican economy. For more information, you can access www.camarapr.org, or our social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

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